

amendment at some point in the future will be for two. That may not be wrong. But what I think is wrong is to do them one at a time. I would hope that you would support the amendment to strike it out of this particular plan. If the Legislature wants to come in and do it for all plans, the rationale for one is the same for all, or all the same for one. But at least then you are dealing with the fiscal impact at a single time, with full realization of its impact. So I would hope you would adopt the amendment so that a precedent is not established because once it is there is no other alternative but to spread it to all systems.

PRESIDENT: Senator Wesely. Senator Wesely, are you on deck? Your light is on. Senator Wesely. Senator Wesely, you are up for recognition on the Beutler-Warner amendment to LB 215.

SENATOR WESELY: Excuse me, Mr. President, members. We've had an Exec. Session going on in Public Health. I apologize as Senator Warner did. He was with some students, and I was trying to do some other things. This amendment is one that in other circumstances I would support, and in this one I did not. The 1 percent adjustment, in the cost of living, is a concept that I think is a fair one. We have to recognize the fact that inflation does eat away at retirement benefits. It is estimated, from a hearing that we had on another bill to provide a 1 percent across the board to all the retirement groups an adjustment in their cost of living benefits, a figure that shows over the last ten years the benefit level has gone from \$100, let's say ten years ago, to \$50 or less today. So that person who is a long-time retiree sees a tremendous erosion of their income, whereas the social security system does have a cost of living adjustment which automatically goes up, and which I don't necessarily agree with. I don't like the idea of, every time the cost of living goes up, having an automatic equal increase in retirement benefits. But a 1 percent, slight adjustment over a period of time, helps cut down the erosion of the basic benefit level. It seems as though that is a reasonable approach. From the figures that I've seen that does increase the retirement benefit cost overall maybe around a 9 percent figure. But at the same time we have to recognize that that increased cost is resulting in those people that are long-time retirees having a somewhat better situation years from now to better reflect the fact that we did provide them a standard of living and ought to try, at